

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-12 and 15-22 remain pending in the application, with Claims 1, 4, 7, 12, 15 and 18 being independent. Claims 1, 4, 7, 12, 15 and 18 have been amended herein.

Claims 1, 8, 9, 12, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,575,549 (Silverbrook). Claims 7 and 18 were rejected under § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,481,816 (Oyen). Claims 10 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Silverbrook in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,929,875 (Su et al.). Claims 11 and 22 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Silverbrook in view of Oyen. Claims 4-6 and 15-17 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Oyen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,278,469 (Bland). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Silverbrook relates to a printing method in which when a particular nozzle is not functioning correctly, a missing dot is compensated by a dot from an adjacent nozzle. Normally the control system alternates the side of the defective nozzle on which to print the extra drops. The missing dots are not always printed by alternating between adjacent nozzles, but also can take into consideration whether an adjacent nozzle has its own information to print. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that Silverbrook adds printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle to that corresponding to a neighboring nozzle based

on a landing state of ink ejected from the neighboring nozzle, as is recited in the independent claims.

In Oyen, in the event of a breakdown of an image forming element, the information of that pixel is transferred to an addressable position in the vicinity of the associated pixel. As shown in Figures 5A-5D, when an ink duct i is faulty, data corresponding to the ink duct i is added to data corresponding to neighboring ink ducts h and j. As understood by Applicants, Oyen describes nozzles incapable of ejecting ink, namely, blocked nozzles. As understood by Applicants, Oyen does not disclose or suggest that abnormal nozzles include nozzles incapable of ejecting ink and nozzles whose landing state of ink is not normal, as is recited in the independent claims. That is, with the present invention, even nozzles that can eject ink, but have abnormal landing states, can be considered abnormal nozzles and be compensated.

The remaining citations have been reviewed, but are not believed to remedy the deficiencies of the citations noted above with respect to the independent claims.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claim 1, 4, 7, 12, 15 and 18. Dependent Claims 5, 6, 8-11, 16, 17 and 19-22 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in the respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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